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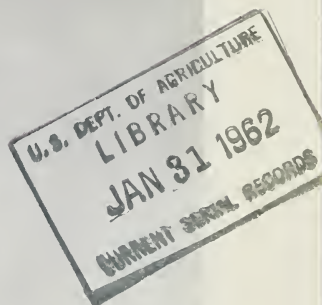
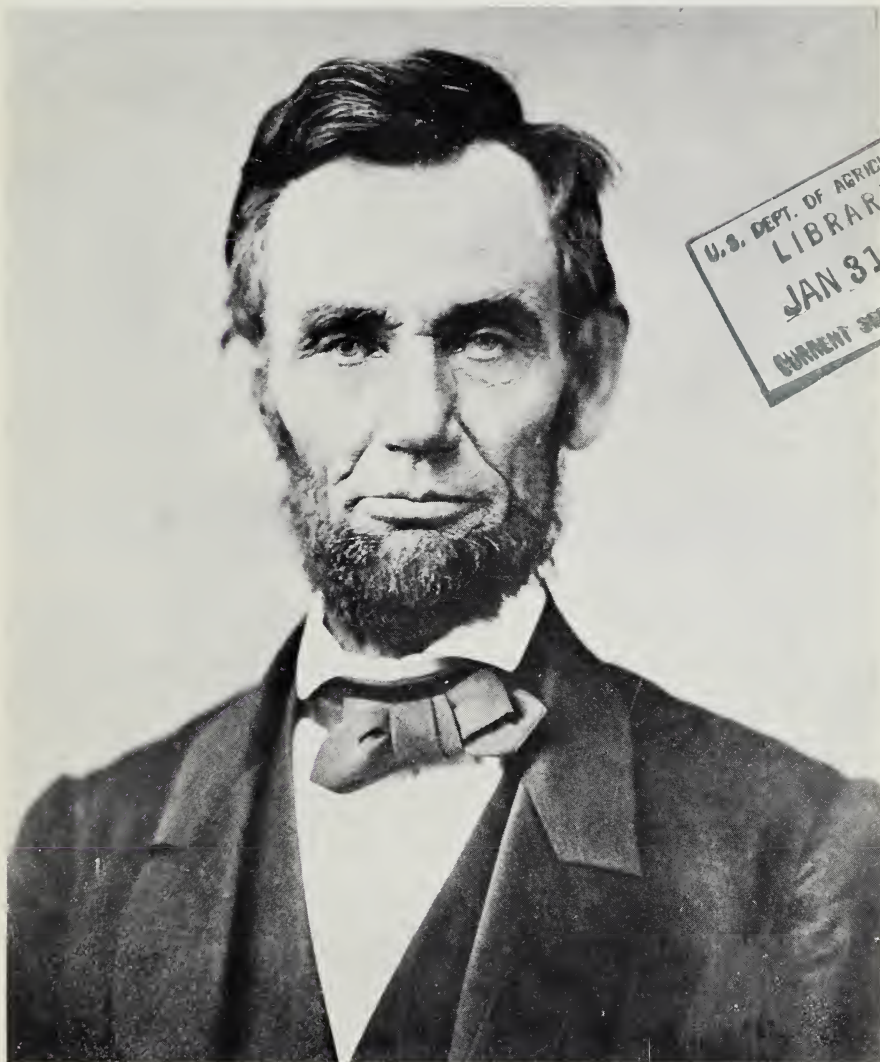
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JANUARY  
1962

# Rural Lines

RURAL ELECTRIFICATION ADMINISTRATION

• U. S. DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE



The Library of Congress

**"The Agricultural Department . . . is precisely the people's Department, in which they feel more directly concerned than in any other."**

*Fourth Annual Message to Congress*

*A. Lincoln*

**CENTENNIAL ISSUE**



## A Message from the ADMINISTRATOR

On May 15, the United States Department of Agriculture will observe its one hundredth anniversary. This is an event of national magnitude, and we at REA hope that all of you will join in the observance. We are pleased to dedicate this issue of **RURAL LINES** to the Centennial of Agriculture by portraying, in pictures and words, the emergence of American agriculture from a lonely do-it-by-hand way of life to broader horizons of better living through the use of machinery, electric power, and scientific methods.

In May of this year REA also will observe an anniversary—its 27th. REA has been an agency of the Department of Agriculture since 1939, and we are extremely proud of the contributions made by REA and its borrowers to the march of progress of American agriculture. The REA programs are responsible for bringing electric light and power to America's farms and to the most remote rural outposts of our country and for making available to rural people the vital benefits of modern telecommunications.

We are pleased with our past, but we are not content to rest with it. Continued agricultural progress and new opportunities for economic advancement are vital to our Nation's farmers and rural people. The importance of a healthy, stable agriculture extends beyond the farm. A prosperous agriculture benefits our entire Nation. The Department of Agriculture is truly "the people's department" because of the widespread effect of its activities and programs. REA is looking forward to participating in USDA's second century of service by making even greater contributions to our national welfare through rural electrification, telephony, and rural areas development.

  
Administrator

*Rural Lines*

*June E. Panciera, Editor*

*Contributors to this issue: Hubert Kelley, Jr., Bernard Krug, Donald Runyon, Barton Stewart, Jr.*

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*Old USDA building on Mall, decorated for GAR Encampment.*

## USDA: "The People's Department"

After President Abraham Lincoln affixed his signature to the bill creating the Department of Agriculture, he commented:

"This Department will one day realize the fondest anticipation of its most sanguine friends and become the fruitful source of advantage to all our people."

It was May 15, 1862, and the Nation was torn in two by the Civil War. With the agricultural West clamoring for more recognition of the problems of the farmer, the President sensed the agricultural revolution that was in the making.

The causes of this revolution went back almost to the beginning of the century, but the start of the war gave it an impetus that had to be recognized. The skyrocketing demand for food supplies, leather, wool, animals stimulated an almost unprecedented production. The labor shortage, brought on by enlistments and the draft, led to the introduction of machinery on a large scale. It was time for the Government to act.

Benjamin Franklin, Thomas Jefferson, and others had collected and distributed seeds and plants before the American Revolution, and this service had been carried on by the U. S. Patent Office since 1839.

But farmers were no longer satisfied. They wanted the Government to open up its public lands. They got the Homestead Act of 1862. They wanted more agricultural colleges. They got the Morrill Land Grant Act of 1862. They wanted an agricultural bureau that was more than just a place to write for free seeds. They got the Department of Agriculture.



The Library of Congress

*Union munitions and material pile up at Collins Dock, New York.*

Headed by Commissioner Isaac Newton and a staff of one clerk, the new department went to work to carry out Congress' mandate:

"To acquire and diffuse among the people of the United States useful information on subjects connected with agriculture in the most general and comprehensive sense of the word, and to procure, propagate, and distribute among the people new and valuable seed and plants."

Once established, the Department assumed more widely diversified duties. In his Fourth Annual Message to Congress, on December 6, 1864, President Lincoln said:

"The Agricultural Department, under the supervision of its present energetic and faithful head, is rapidly commending itself to the great and vital interest it was created to advance. It is precisely the people's Department, in which they feel more directly concerned than in any other. I commend it to the continued attention and fostering care of Congress."

An important aspect of its early work was the study of diseases and insects that injured plant and animal life, and research to find ways to suppress and eradicate them.

It investigated the culture of tea, silk, cotton, tobacco, and sugar, to improve U.S. crops. It studied plants and grasses adapted to cultivation in arid areas, to improve the quality and productivity of the great grazing lands of the West.

In addition to these purely agricultural studies, the Department investigated the effects of adulteration of foods on the value of food products and on the health of the human body.



By 1884 the Department's work in the field of animal husbandry had become so important that a separate Bureau of Animal Industry was created by Congress. One of its duties was to fight animal diseases and protect the export market. Establishment of the Bureau was a milestone, particularly because it served notice that the "people's department" was now more than a fact-finding and information-disseminating agency. Something new had been added: The power to regulate.

In 1889, the Department achieved cabinet status. The honor of being named the first Secretary of Agriculture went to Norman J. Colman. As the 19th century came to an end, the Department's regulatory duties slowly were expanded. It widened its meat inspection duties to include the domestic market, and it took charge of inspecting dairy products for the export trade.

The agrarian drive was now on in earnest. It furnished a great deal of the momentum behind the passage of the Federal interstate commerce law, aimed at the control of common carriers. Its power was reflected in the rural free delivery act, the irrigation act, the farm credit and co-op legislation.

Before the 20th century was well on its course, farmers, while rejecting the doctrines of socialism, were, like all other powerful groups, making use of the government to promote collective advantages and to force other interests into acceptable lines of action.

The McNary-Haugen Act was a case in point. Agricultural prices had dropped sharply and unexpectedly in the summer of 1920, following a postwar expectation that an enormous demand for American farm products would follow the removal of restrictions on consumption in the European nations.

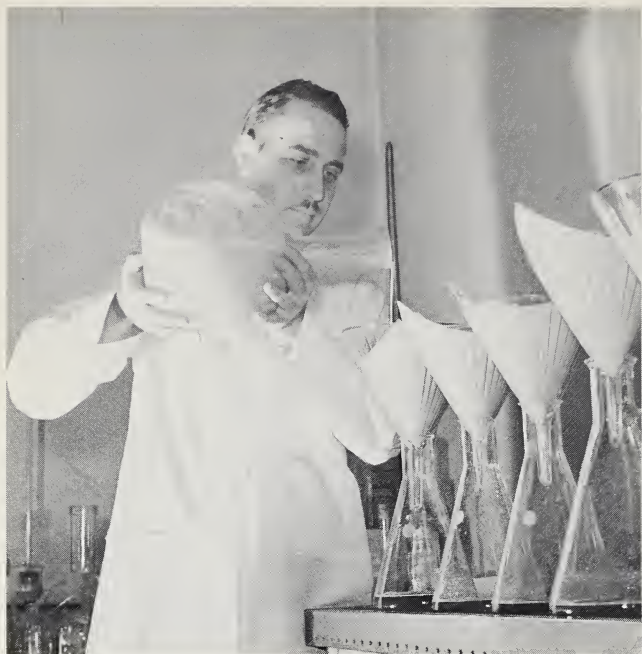
Two Midwest farm equipment manufacturers suggested a plan for the solution of the farm problem. The plan, later published under the title "Equality for Agriculture," proposed selling products for domestic consumption at a fair exchange value and surplus agricultural products at a world price. It was discussed with officials of the Department and with leaders of farm organizations, and was introduced into Congress as the McNary-Haugen bill in 1924.

Passed by Congress in 1927 and 1928, but vetoed both times by President Coolidge, the bill served during the 1920's as a rallying point for farmers, farm organizations, and farm leaders. Pressure for farm relief continued, until by 1929, the Federal Government was committed to the idea of accepting some responsibility for farm prices.

Agriculture had passed out of the age of mere uproarious protest, into the age of collective effort and constructive measures.

*Land rush into the Cherokee Strip, Oklahoma, began at noon September 16, 1893.*





*Bureau of Animal Industry scientist prepares antitoxin.*

*Headquarters of USDA in Washington now covers five city blocks.*







The Kansas State Historical Society

*Homesteaders with sod house in Beaver County, Oklahoma.*

## A CENTURY OF RURAL CHANGE

Agriculture in 1862 was a sleeping giant suddenly come to life. With passage of the Homestead Act, millions of acres of land—rich, fertile, and undeveloped—were opened up to Americans with enough enterprise to work them. Between 1862 and 1910, 243 million acres of public lands were switched to private ownership, and the number of farms in this country rose from 2 million to nearly 6.5 million.

The people swarmed to the land. They came from everywhere. They were restless eastern farmers looking for something better; poverty-stricken urban families seeking their fortunes in the open spaces; immigrants from every country in Europe. No matter what their origin, they discovered that they had chosen a new life which imposed its own stern hardships. Depending on where they settled, they struggled through bitterly cold winters or bouts with malaria. They faced droughts and Indians and locusts and grasshoppers. Many died young; many saw their children die.

They learned that they must depend on their own industry and ingenuity for survival. They not only produced crops and livestock, but they made their own farm implements, furniture, clothing. Where there were trees, they cut timber to build their barns, houses, schools, and churches. On the Great Plains, they built sod houses or even dugouts. Whatever they had, they had done for themselves.

Many quit, and a lot of those who stuck it out may have shared the sentiments of the Nebraska sodbuster who said that he had lived for 3 years on nothing but “dried beans and hope” and was about to run out of both of them.



The Library of Congress

## MEN AND ANIMALS FURNISHED THE POWER

to run American agriculture in 1862. There had been a few changes in farming methods since the Middle Ages, but they were minor ones compared to the changes which were just ahead. The plowshare had been transformed from wood to iron, and from iron to chilled iron, but the energy to pull it through the earth still came from horses, mules, and oxen.

Mechanical reapers had been invented—as had the cotton gin—but inventions of agricultural machinery generally had come slowly, and they were accepted by farmers more slowly still. Many technical difficulties presented themselves to the inventor of workable field machinery, since it had to function well while rolling over uneven terrain, in mud or dust, despite rocks, sticks, and grasshoppers. Most farmers in 1862 felt themselves fortunate if they had good, strong, healthy draft animals.



## WOMEN POWERED THE HOME

and raised the children and milked the cows and kept the chickens and looked after the vegetable garden. They lugged water and built fires and scrubbed the wash and ironed clothes and did the canning and grew old before their time.

The wind pumped water for cattle; women usually had to pump their own. Waterwheels ground the grain for bread, but women kneaded the dough by hand. Horses pulled plows, but animals couldn't help with kitchen and wash-house chores. The farm woman's life was a narrow one and full of ceaseless burden, and it remained so during 75 of the Department of Agriculture's first 100 years. The farmer's wife had to wait for electricity to emancipate her.



## THE FARM FAMILY WAS ISOLATED

from other people, from markets, from ideas. There was little enough communication with neighbors, much less with New York or San Francisco. Farmers were cut off from help in case of fire, in case of accident or sickness, in case of storm or other natural disaster.

But the effect of the farmer's isolation went beyond these considerations. Man cut off from the company of his fellow creatures turns inward. Loneliness turned many people on the frontier into "characters"—eccentrics or pugnacious types, suspicious of strangers. Perhaps it was children, naturally open and friendly, who felt the loss of human companionship most keenly.

Recalling his boyhood on a 40-acre cotton farm in Fannin County, Texas, the late Speaker of the House Sam Rayburn once told a reporter:

"I'd sit on fences on Sunday and wish that somebody would ride by on a horse—just anybody to relieve the monotony."

*In 1936, no wires linked this Nebraska farm with light and neighbors.*





*Many farm children were lonely, with too much work and not enough fun.*

*In 1905, Kansas farmers found relief from monotony at Abilene carnival.*

The Kansas State Historical Society





## OUT OF SHEDS

and laboratories came help for the farmer and his family. After the Civil War, there was a great surge in applied science and invention. In 1874, Glidden got his patent on barbed wire. A year later, the first State agricultural experiment station was established, in Connecticut. In 1877, the U. S. Entomological Commission was formed to study grasshoppers. A twine-knotter was perfected by John F. Appleby in 1878, and the following year Deering put the twine-grain binder on the market. The combine went into factory production in the 1880's, and a modern cream separator, invented in Sweden, arrived in the United States in 1882.

By 1880, 10,000 patents relating to harvesting machinery had been recorded in this country alone. American ingenuity, the will to make it work better and faster, was beginning to come to the aid of the American farmer.



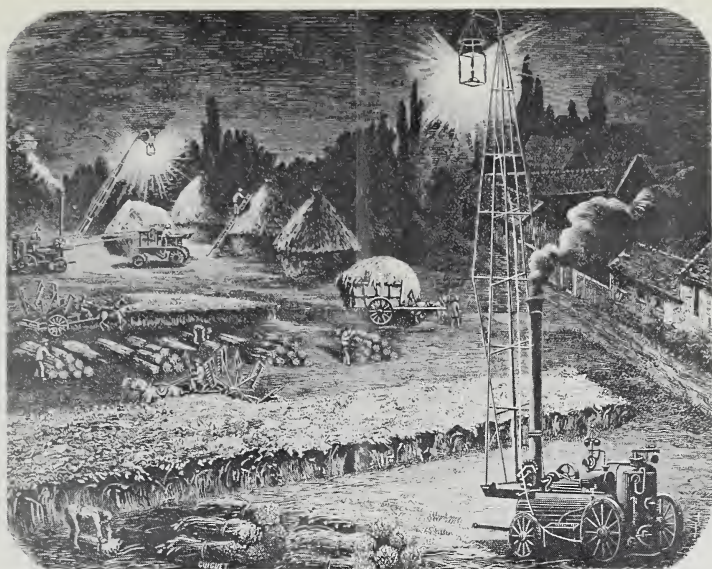
State Historical Society of Wisconsin

*McCormick patented reaper in 1834.*

*Steam tractor burning lignite threshing on an Ohio farm.*







*French artist's vision in 1884 of use of electricity on the farm.*

## ARCHITECTS OF THE FARM REVOLUTION

Not all the inventors whose creations have revolutionized life on the farm were inventors of farm equipment. Whitney and Glidden and McCormick may have altered the farmer's tools, but men like Edison and Ford and Westinghouse changed his whole way of life.

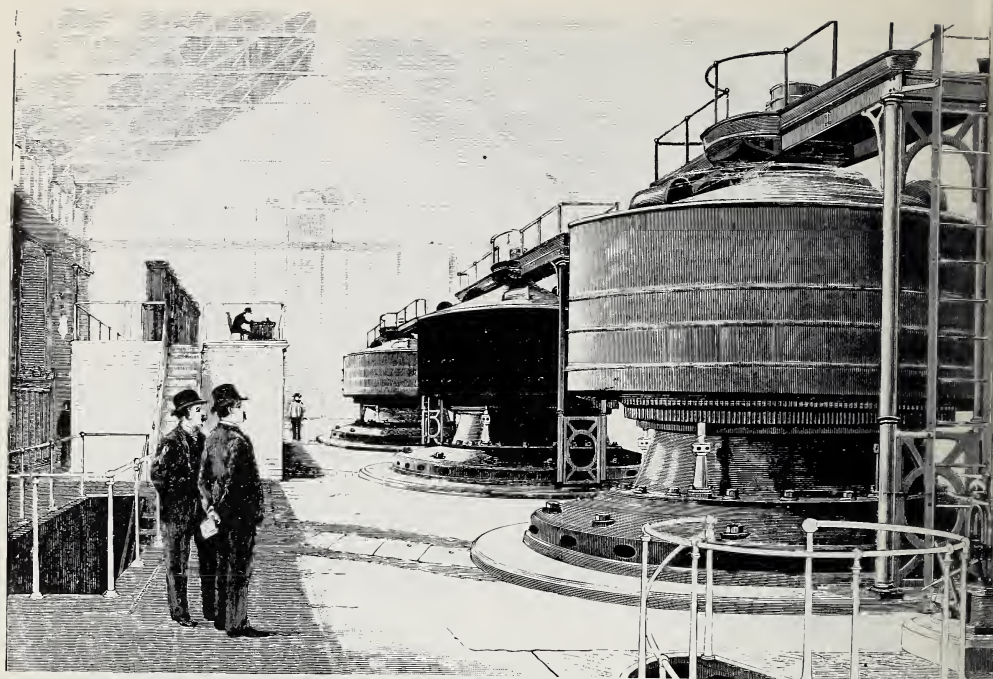
Thomas A. Edison invented the electric incandescent lamp in 1879. This was one of many Edison inventions, for which he was granted 1,200 patents in his lifetime, but it was destined to prove his most important. The electric light, together with the development of the dynamo, made central station electric service a practical possibility. Until then, inventors had thought of electricity as a force to be generated when and where it was needed. The idea of generating it continuously at a central place and transmitting it to customers was a new one.

In 1882, Edison opened his Pearl Street Station in lower Manhattan, generating electricity to light bulbs in some 30 homes, and central station service was born.

Four years later, George Westinghouse conceived the idea of an alternating current electric system. The outstanding characteristic of this system was that voltage could be economically stepped up for transmission and then stepped down for utilization, so that transmission over long distances became practical. By World War I, it was possible to transmit power 100 miles from a central station, and engineers began thinking about the feasibility of rural electric service.

Meanwhile, other developments were taking place which would have a profound influence on the farmer's life. In the 1890's, the Duryea brothers finally got a gasoline-powered horseless carriage to work, and a whole new industry was born. For a few years, the new contraption was the curse of farmers, since it caused horses to shy. People called it the "rich man's plaything," and a good





The Smithsonian

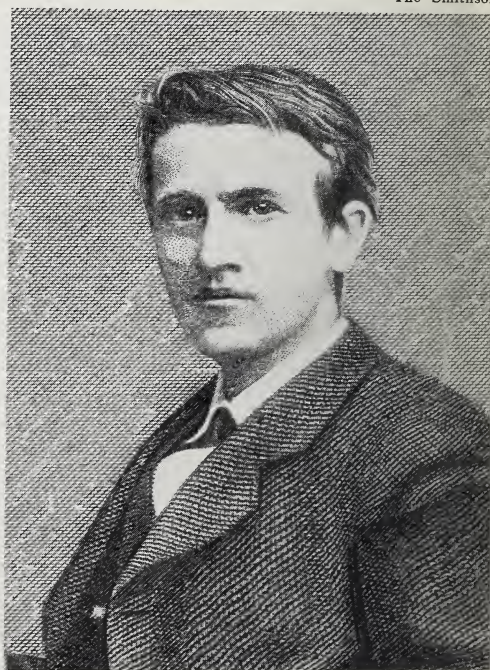
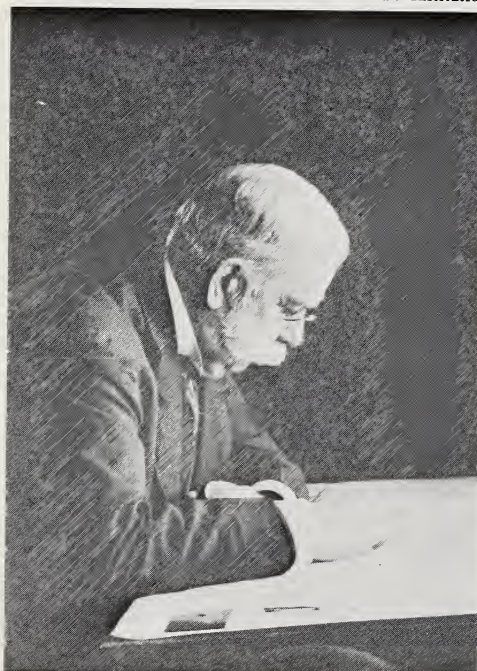
*Tesla's pioneer hydroelectric plant at Niagara Falls, New York, 1896.*

*George Westinghouse, 1846-1914*

The Smithsonian Institution

*Thomas A. Edison, 1847-1931*

The Smithsonian

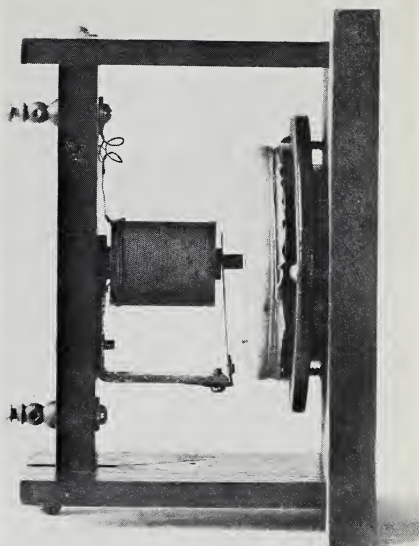






The Smithsonian Institution

*Alexander Graham Bell, 1847-1922, made this first telephone in 1875.*



The Smithsonian Institution

*Telegraph lines beat wagon train to Needle Rocks, Utah in 1866.*

The Kansas State Historical Society







*Even farm women learned to repair the Model T*

many farmers made a dollar or two on the side by pulling autos out of the mud.

But in 1908, a mechanical genius named Henry Ford took the automobile out of the “plaything” category once and for all. That was the year he introduced his Model T, an all-purpose carrier that traveled the few paved highways at a jaunty 25 miles per hour and wallowed through axle-deep mud to carry produce to market, haul fertilizer back to the farm, take the family to church and Grange meetings, and give the boys a chance to meet some girls in the next county.

One of the best things about the Model T is that it turned other people into inventors. It was a car that could be repaired with a piece of baling wire, and an ingenious man could turn it into just about anything. For instance, a man could buy a set of two tractor wheels, made just to fit the Model T axle. A cartoon in a book on the Model T shows a farmer asking his wife: “Do you have to drive into town today, Ma? I was counting on using the car for plowin’ the north twenty.”

The car was also a power plant that could run a saw, fill a silo, or operate a washing machine. But best of all, the automobile, particularly when all-weather rural roads came along, put an end to the farmer’s isolation.

Other inventors were working on ideas that would put the farmer in touch with the world. The 1872 farmer could pick up a little news via the Morse telegraph when he went to town. The telegraph was invented in 1844, and the first transcontinental telegraph line was completed at Salt Lake City in 1861.

But the clacking key soon took a back seat to the invention of Alexander Graham Bell, who held his first successful telephone conversation in 1876. Until the radio came along, the party-line telephone was, in all likelihood, the chief entertainment of many farm families.

## FARMERS APPLIED THE NEW INVENTIONS

just as soon as they could afford to do so. In 1894, when the Bell patents expired, many small telephone manufacturing companies began to eye the rural telephone market. Farmers were interested, and they formed companies, mutuals, and co-operatives and built their own magneto telephone systems. By 1912, there were more than 32,000 of these mutuals and other farmer systems serving rural people, and this figure nearly doubled during the next 15 years.

Farmers bought automobiles, trucks, and tractors in ever-increasing numbers and they also bought single-cylinder, "one-lunger" gasoline engines to pump water and perform other farm chores. While they needed electricity most of all, you couldn't buy central station electric service the way you could buy a Model T. It cost too much for an individual to finance it, and rural people soon discovered that power companies were unwilling to finance much rural service themselves. The more prosperous farmers found ways to generate their own electricity, but most of them were unsatisfactory. They tried gasoline-driven generators, batteries, and generators driven by windmills and water wheels. They got enough power for a few lights—but that's about all. Electricity was the one great invention of the 19th Century which the farmer couldn't apply—even after 35 years of the 20th had passed.



The Kansas State Historical Society

*Rural "Central" knew everything, everybody around Dorrance, Kansas, in 1910.*





J. C. Allen and Son

*"One-lunger" gasoline engine powers wooden washing machine.*



National Archives

*Steam tractor powered  
irrigation pump  
in early experiment.*

*Ingenious farmer replaces Dobbin with cut-down 1926 Buick.*







## "THE BIGGEST LIFT

that farmers ever had" was how the late Sam Rayburn described rural electrification a couple of years ago. The program began on May 11, 1935, when President Franklin D. Roosevelt created the Rural Electrification Administration. A year later, the agency received statutory authority with passage of the Rural Electrification Act of 1936, co-authored by Senator George Norris of Nebraska and Representative Rayburn.

When REA began operations, only 10.9 percent of America's farms were receiving central station electric service. Since that time, more than 1,000 local organizations, most of them cooperatives, have borrowed money from REA to build electric systems in rural areas. Today more than 97 percent of all U. S. farms have electricity, and REA borrowers serve more than half of these electrified farms.

REA, which became an agency of the U. S. Department of Agriculture in 1939, has pursued an "area coverage" policy, urging its borrowers to serve entire rural areas, including the more sparsely settled sections as well as the thickly settled ones. It is this policy which has helped push power lines into every far corner of rural America.

So far, REA has approved more than \$4 billion in loans to its 1,000 electric borrowers to serve some 5 million rural consumers. Already more than \$1 billion in principal has been repaid, plus half a billion dollars in interest.

Still another communications link is being provided through another REA loan program, established by the Congress in October 1949. REA was authorized to lend money to telephone cooperatives and independent telephone companies to improve existing service and to provide new service for rural people. In almost all cases, REA approves loans only for automatic dial systems. So far, the agency has loaned more than \$840 million to 212 cooperatives and 549 commercial companies. Since the loan program began, the percentage of U.S. farms with telephones has risen from about 38 percent to 65 percent.



*Co-op members turn out in droves for annual meeting.*

### **"ELECTRIC CO-OPS BROUGHT FARM PEOPLE TOGETHER**

more than anything else I can recall," commented Bernard Baruch, financier and adviser to Presidents, in a recent interview. Rural families were enthusiastic about the prospect of finally getting electric lights—at reasonable rates—and many proved willing to work long hours without pay to get the systems under-way. The 1935 farmer wanted electricity more than any other single commodity, and he was proud that his own co-op, of which he was part owner, was able to get power to his farm.

The farmer was quick to prove that he was a bigger potential user of power than his neighbor in the city, who had enjoyed the benefits of electricity for many years. The first REA-financed lines were built to handle an expected usage of from 40 to 100 kilowatt-hours of electricity per month per consumer. By 1960, the average monthly kwh consumption per farm consumer on REA-financed lines was up to 370, and the average for all types of rural consumers climbed to 467 kwh. In States like Nevada, with pump irrigation, usage topped 1,000 kwh. Rural demand for power continues to double every 5 to 7 years, and a large proportion of current REA loans is going to increase the capacity of the rural systems.

All this power is being used by farmers for about 500 different purposes—in the home, in the barn, and around the farm. Its application has revolutionized the production of milk, poultry and eggs, and meat animals, and farmers are finding new uses for electricity every day. Electric power also took the farmer's wife out of bondage, and, through radio and television, it put her whole family in touch with the world.



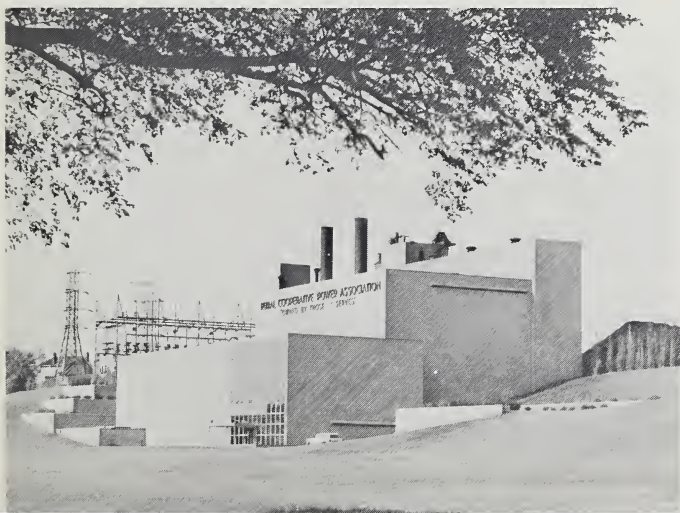


*Curious farmers examine electric equipment exhibit outside country dance hall, Wisconsin, 1932.*



*Electric heater keeps small pigs from freezing in lean-tos.*

*REA-financed generating plant at Elk River, Minnesota, produces power for member co-ops.*





*Executive of REA-financed telephone company tests equipment in automatic dial central office.*

*Electric pump irrigation has made millions of arid acres produce.*





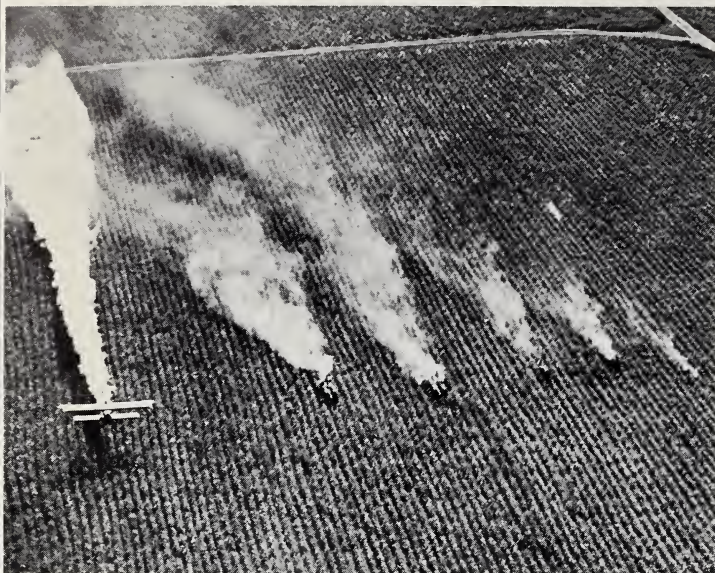


## THE FIRST 100 YEARS OF USDA

have spanned a period of ceaseless change in American agriculture. In 1862, one farmer produced enough food for 5 people. Today he feeds 26. In 1862, it took nearly 39 hours of labor to produce 40 bushels of corn on 1 acre. Today it takes less than 3½ hours to produce 53 bushels on 1 acre.

The application of power to farming—through the electric motor, and the gasoline or diesel engine—has contributed to this phenomenal increase in production and decrease in labor time. There have been many other factors, of course. They include the application of commercial fertilizer; the development of new and better plants, including hybrid corn; the cure and control of plant and animal diseases; the control of many harmful insects; the conservation of water, land, and forests; improved educational opportunities for farm people. In all these areas, the U. S. Department of Agriculture, working in close cooperation with the Land Grant Colleges, has been a pioneer and a leader. Today its many activities aid the city consumer as much as the farmer, for the quality and purity of the food eaten by all Americans is due in large measure to USDA standards. Most recently, the Department has embarked on a program of Rural Areas Development, aimed at helping local people lift the total economy of the rural areas in which they reside through better land use, better marketing, and new local businesses, industries, and processing plants.

Today, as the U. S. Department of Agriculture begins its second century of service to the American people, it has already fulfilled Abraham Lincoln's prophecy. It is truly "the people's department."



*Men (right), horses, tractors, and, finally, an airplane demonstrate 100 years of crop dusting progress.*

*Custom combining near Alliance, Nebraska.*





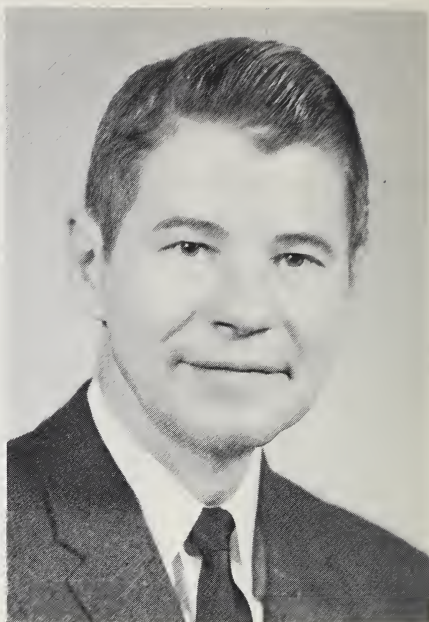
*Rural factories provide jobs for part-time farmers.*



*Contour strips on a Minnesota farm.*



# You Can Observe the Centennial



*Secretary of Agriculture Freeman*

"The story of American agriculture," says Secretary of Agriculture Orville L. Freeman, "is the great success story of this century. As USDA begins its Centennial year, our farmers are in the vanguard of the great technological revolution of the mid-20th century. They have used new knowledge to produce an agricultural science superior to any in the world."

Because of the contributions of REA borrowers to this tremendous success story, you may wish to include your organization in the Centennial celebration, which begins in May 1962. It is easy to get on this band wagon. Each county has a Centennial planning committee to develop and arrange local observances. These have been organized by county agents. An REA borrower desiring to participate in these local activities needs only to contact the county agent. In many counties Centennial dinners are being planned.

Opening event of the Centennial is a World Food Forum to be held in Washington, D. C., May 15 through

May 17. Eminent national and international food and agricultural authorities will attend and participate in the Forum. Its objectives are:

1. To recognize the pre-eminence of American agriculture and agricultural technology.
2. To provide an international exchange of views on current and emerging world problems by world authorities in the fields of agricultural techniques, economics, and sociology.
3. To advance the application of modern agricultural science in less-developed countries of the world, and
4. To signal the 100th anniversary of the Department.

Other plans for the Centennial include open house events at agricultural colleges and field days at agricultural experiment stations. These will present appropriate programs to report and interpret research and service developments.

The 1962 Yearbook of Agriculture will include two chapters about the



rural electrification program and rural telephone service, in telling about the present state of agriculture in the United States and in estimating future trends.

A history of USDA will tell how the Department grew. It will relate USDA policies and programs to major changes which have occurred in the economic, social, and political life of the Nation.

Exhibits and festivals will depict agriculture's contributions to the welfare of the American people and to the strength of the national economy. A photography exhibit and a film festival already are in stages of preparation, and many other materials—bulletins, leaflets, books, film-strips, radio tapes, and a speakers bureau—will be available for observance of the Centennial.

A new series of 16 mm, 13½-minute motion pictures, in color and in black and white and cleared for television, is being produced for release about May 1, 1962.

"Our Land—Its Many Faces" traces the history of soil and water conservation from colonial days to the present.

"Heritage Restored" offers a unique historical report on the establishment of National Forests in the eastern part of the United States.

"Discovery" is the story of agricultural research.

"Our Agricultural Lifelines" presents today's farm marketing system.

"Alice in Numberland" portrays, through the world of fantasy, how statistical research guides the flow of America's food from farm to table.

"We Show the Way" is a report on agricultural education.

"It's a Farmer's Business" presents the farmer cooperatives and their place in the American economy.

A documentary centennial film, "Agriculture, U.S.A.," also is in production. In color, it will run 27½ minutes. This film is a sweeping panorama of

today's agriculture, with a glimpse of the future.

"The REA Story," a 27½-minute color, sound film remains available.

The major new books will be the 1962 Yearbook of Agriculture and the first comprehensive history of the Department.

A walk-through photo exhibit, "The Changing Faces of Our Land," will be shown in the Department's Administration Building in Washington starting May 14, 1962. It will be available for use elsewhere after June 22. This exhibit consists of two separate sections, each 25 x 25 x 8 feet. The other principal exhibit tells "The Meat Miracle" story. This display covers 1,000 square feet of floor space. Transportation costs are paid by exhibitors.

The Department also has many bulletins and leaflets that will help to explain agriculture's importance to consumers, to the national economy, and to defense. These include "Background on Our Nation's Agriculture" (Leaflet 491), "The Food We Eat" (Miscellaneous Publication 870), "Food Is A Bargain" (Marketing Bulletin 18), and "The U. S. Department of Agriculture: How It Serves You" (PA-394). Single copies are available without cost.

Where to Obtain Materials: *Motion Pictures for Television*. Motion Picture Service, Office of Information, U. S. Department of Agriculture, Washington 25, D. C. For showings of films other than on television, ask Motion Picture Service for a list of cooperating film libraries in the States. *Exhibits*. Exhibit Service, Office of Information, U. S. Department of Agriculture, Washington, 25, D. C., *Free Bulletins and Leaflets*. Publications Division, Office of Information, U. S. Department of Agriculture, Washington 25, D. C.

*The Yearbook of Agriculture and the Department History*. Superintendent of Documents, Government Printing Office, Washington 25, D. C. Watch for dates of publication and prices.

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Growth Through Agricultural Progress

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE  
CENTENNIAL YEAR

BY THE PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

**A Proclamation**

*Whereas May 15, 1862, marks the centennial of the approval by President Lincoln of legislation establishing the United States Department of Agriculture; and*

*Whereas the Department of Agriculture through its research, service, and educational work has enabled our farmers and ranchers, processors, and distributors to provide the food, fiber, and wood products necessary to a healthful, vigorous, and expanding population through increased efficiency in the production, utilization, and marketing of agricultural products; and*

*Whereas an economically sound agriculture and a rewarding rural life are essential to the national well-being; and*

*Whereas our productive agriculture has enabled the Government and many private organizations to initiate programs to alleviate hunger and suffering among peoples throughout the world; and*

*Whereas the emergence of a progressive, efficient, and productive agriculture during the one hundred years since the establishment of the Department of Agriculture has resulted in large measure from the close cooperation between the Department of Agriculture and the national system of land-grant universities and colleges which was founded under the first Morrill Act of July 2, 1862, and this historical anniversary will also be observed during the same year; and*

*Whereas the Congress, by a joint resolution approved August 25, 1961, has requested the President to issue a proclamation designating 1962 as the centennial year of the establishment of the United States Department of Agriculture;*

*Now, Therefore, I, John F. Kennedy, President of the United States of America, do hereby designate the year 1962 as United States Department of Agriculture Centennial Year; and I request the Department of Agriculture to plan and to participate in appropriate activities recognizing the anniversary to the end that the centennial may serve as an occasion to commemorate the contributions of agriculture to the health and welfare of every citizen, to the national well-being, and to the development of emerging nations.*

*I also request that, in its centennial observances, the Department of Agriculture cooperate with the land-grant universities and colleges in recognition of a century of mutually beneficial cooperative relationships, and with other appropriate organizations and individuals.*

*In Witness Whereof, I have hereunto set my hand and caused the Seal of the United States of America to be affixed.*

Done at the City of Washington this twenty-fifth day of August in the year of our Lord nineteen hundred and sixty-one, and of the Independence of the United States of America the one hundred and eighty-sixth.

(Seal)

John F. Kennedy

By the President

Dean Rusk

Secretary of State.